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THE CIA--An Attack and a Reply

A FORMER STAFF OFFICER CRITICIZES CIA ACTIVITIES

Is the CIA starting to spy on Americans at home--turning talents and money against students, blacks, others? That is one of several key questions raised in a wide ranging criticism. A direct response starts on page 81.

THE ATTACK

The following was written by Edward K. DeLong of United Press International, based on an interview with a Central Intelligence Agency official who has resigned. The dispatch was distributed by UPI for publication on October 3.

Victor Marchetti embarked 16 years ago on a career that was all any aspiring young spy could ask. But two years ago, after reaching the highest levels of the Central Intelligence Agency, he became disenchanted with what he perceived to be amorality, overwhelming military influence, waste and duplicity in the spy business. He quit.

Fearing today that the CIA may already have begun "going against the enemy within" the United States as they may conceive it--that is, dissident student groups and civil-rights organizations--Marchetti has launched a campaign for more presidential and congressional control over the entire U. S. intelligence community.

"I think we need to do this because we're getting into an awfully dangerous era when we have all this talent (for clandestine operations) in the CIA--and more being developed in the military, which is getting into clandestine "ops" (operations)--and there just aren't that many places any more to display that talent," Marchetti says.

"The cold war is fading. So is the war in Southeast Asia, except for Laos. At the same time, we're getting a lot of domestic problems. And there are people in the CIA who--if they aren't right now actually already running domestic operations against student groups, black movements and the like--are certainly considering it.

"This is going to get to be very tempting," Marchetti said in a recent interview at his comfortable home in Oakton, [Va.], a Washington suburb where many CIA men live.

"There'll be a great temptation for these people to suggest operations and for a President to approve them or to kind of look the other way. You have the danger of intelligence turning against the nation itself, going against the 'the enemy within.'"

Marchetti speaks of the CIA from an insider's point of view. At Pennsylvania State University he deliberately prepared himself for an intelligence career, graduating in 1955 with a degree in Russian studies and history.

Through a professor secretly on the CIA payroll as a talent scout, Marchetti netted the prize all would-be spies dream of--an immediate job offer from the CIA. The offer came during a secret meeting in a hotel room, set up by a stranger who telephoned and identified himself only as "a friend of your brother."

Marchetti spent one year as a CIA agent in the field and 10 more as an analyst of intelligence relating to the Soviet Union, rising through the ranks until he was helping prepare the national intelligence estimates for the White House. During this period, Marchetti says, "I was a hawk. I believed in what we were doing."

Then he was promoted to the executive staff of the CIA, moving to an office on the top floor of the Agency's headquarters across the Potomac River from Washington.

For three years he worked as special assistant to the CIA chief of plans, programs and budgeting, as special assistant to the CIA's executive director, and as executive assistant to the Agency's deputy director, V. Adm. Rufus L. Taylor.



Mr. Marchetti

"This put me in a very rare position within the Agency and within the intelligence community in general, in that I was in a place where it was being all pulled together," Marchetti said.

"I could see how intelligence analysis was done and how it fitted into the scheme of clandestine operations. It also gave me an opportunity to get a good view of the intelligence community, too: the National Security Agency, the DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency), the national reconnaissance organization--the whole bit. And I started to see the politics within the community and the politics between the community and the outside. This change of perspective during those three years had a profound effect on me, because I began to see things I didn't like."

With many of his lifelong views about the world shattered, Marchetti decided to abandon his chosen career. One of the last things he did at the CIA was to explain to Director Richard Helms why he was leaving.

MORI/CDF